

Winthrop Sun Transcript

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Editorial

Show your Viking Pride

Although the legislature and governor tell us that the state has a surplus of \$1 billion over their anticipated revenue projections, pardon us for feeling as though we are living in the poorhouse. After all, how can it be said by any one of our legislators with a straight face that the state has a billion dollar surplus when we daily read of the shortfalls in virtually every aspect of state government, including local aid, such that the level of most state services still is below that of 2001?

As we have stated before in this space, we are in an unprecedented era as regards local aid from the state for our cities and towns. Although local aid always has fluctuated with the economy, the "up" periods always have not only made up for the downturns, but also have advanced local aid beyond the previous up cycle.

However, even though our economy has been humming along for the past two years, local aid still is below the level of a few years ago. And if you factor in inflation, local aid is really far less than it was in 2001. Moreover, both the legislature and the governor clearly have indicated that they have no intention of increasing local aid in the near future.

Thus, for the first time in the past 40 years (ever since Governor Volpe pushed the sales tax through the legislature and dedicated the revenue to cities and towns in 1966), local communities will continue to lay off teachers and other municipal employees while the state just stands by and allows it to happen. We mention all this because the real point we wish to make is that now more than ever, volunteer fundraising in local communities is becoming more and more essential in order to pay for budget items that we formerly took for granted.

That is why the work of the Viking Pride Foundation is crucial in order to assure our young people that they will have the same opportunities for extracurricular activities and other programs that were enjoyed by the generations of students before them.

The Viking Pride Foundation has stepped in with an incredible effort to provide the funds needed for athletics and other endeavors in our schools. But the Viking Pride Foundation's work truly is never done. The need for its assistance to the schools is an indefinite one. Moreover, we have no doubt that the need will continue to grow and to become even more essential in the years ahead.

Thus it is important that every Winthrop citizen who has any sense of pride in our community make a contribution, no matter how small, to the fundraising effort that will take place Saturday from 5 to 10 p.m. at Miller Field.

Viking Pride is a nice slogan, but it will have meaning only if all of us do our part to make it happen.